

Washington, DC -- Congressman Vern Buchanan (FL-13) voted today to protect working families, seniors and small businesses from higher energy costs and called for a truly bipartisan effort to address global warming without threatening jobs and the economy.

“Global warming is a genuine concern that needs to be addressed,” said Buchanan. “But we need to solve the problem without an overly aggressive plan that threatens the economy and increases burdens on small businesses, hard-working families and seniors living on fixed incomes.”

Buchanan voted today against the House Democrat’s global warming bill, H.R. 2454, noting the over-reaching levels of reductions in greenhouse gases mandated by the bill would kill jobs and significantly increase energy costs on families and employers.

The Congressman noted that by imposing tough new requirements and increased costs on manufacturers, the bill puts American companies at a competitive disadvantage with manufacturers in other countries like China, India and Mexico. “This bill would drive jobs overseas as our country struggles to climb out of a deep recession,” said Buchanan.

According to a National Black Chamber of Commerce study, the overly ambitious plan will cost 2.5 million American jobs. The Wall Street Journal said this week the legislation could result in the largest tax increase in American history. President Obama admitted that cap and trade would cause electricity rates to “necessarily skyrocket.” And Duke Energy, a major utility company that would receive free allowances under the Democrats’ plan, has already requested a rate hike of 13.5 percent in anticipation of the bill.

“The last thing we need in a recession is higher costs for consumers and small businesses,” said Buchanan who noted that the bill was strongly opposed by the National Federation of Small Businesses.

The 13th District Congressman also expressed concern that the measure rushed through the House would create a bureaucratic nightmare involving several government agencies. Rep. Collin Peterson, a leading House Democrat and committee chairman, told the “Washington Post”, “The truth is, nobody knows for sure how this is going to work.”

The 1,200-page bill was being rewritten hours before the scheduled vote to attract support. “Washington is broken, and nowhere is this more evident than in the fact that complicated, far-reaching legislation is being brought to the floor that no member could possibly have read ahead of time,” said Buchanan, who has introduced legislation to require a three-day waiting period between when a bill is introduced and when it can be voted on by the Congress.

“As the debate moves to the Senate, I am hopeful for a bipartisan effort to draft a workable bill to reduce harmful emissions to slow global warming without weakening the economy.”